

BOOK / FILM REVIEW

A review is a short description of a film, play, book, etc. It is either formal or informal in style, depending on the readers it is addressed to. Present tenses are normally used in a review as well as a variety of adjectives to make the speech more interesting. A good review should consist of:

- a)** An **introduction** in which you give all the background information of the story: title, author / director, setting, type of story, characters / actors (not developed), etc. (PARAGRAPH 1).
- b)** A **main body** consisting of two paragraphs in which all the main points of the plot are presented in time sequence together with information about the characters –without spoiling the ending- (PARAGRAPH 2) as well as comments on acting, plot, character development, directing, writing style, strengths and weaknesses, etc. (PARAGRAPH 3).
- c)** A **conclusion** in which the writer recommends or does not recommend the film/book/performance, etc. giving reasons (PARAGRAPH 4).

Useful language for reviews

Title, Author / Director, Actors:

The film is directed / produced by...

It is a horror / love / detective / mystery / action / adventure / science fiction story. / It is a thriller.

It is starred by...

The book is written by...

This book is a fiction / non-fiction novel.

Setting:

The action takes place in... (setting)

The (action of the) film is set in...

The story / film takes place in...

Characters and plot:

The main characters are...

The story is about...

The novel tells the story of...

In the course of the novel, the action develops dramatically.

The novel / film begins with...

This work is based on...

The plot focuses on...

The novel has an unexpected twist / ending.

The film reaches a dramatic climax...

Reaction / General comments:

I am impressed by...
I think...
The book is terribly / beautifully written.
The film is terrible / exciting.
What surprised me is...
What I liked is...
What I didn't like is...
I liked / didn't like the film / novel because...
It is rather long / confusing / slow...
The cast is excellent / weak...
The script is dull / clever...
It has a tragic / surprising ending.

Recommendations:

It's (well) worth reading / seeing.
It will change the way you think of...
I wouldn't recommend it because...
It's bound to be on the best sellers list.
I highly recommend it.
It's a highly entertaining read.
It's a bore to read.
Fans of this author will no doubt be thrilled with this latest edition.
It's a must!
I strongly recommend reading this book.
I definitely recommend that you add this to your collection!
Don't miss it. It will change the way you see...

Adjectives to describe plot, script and characters**Positive:**

(Deeply) moving, original, well-written, thrilling, (highly) entertaining, gripping, compelling (= interesting & exciting), page-turner, engaging, haunting, excellent, well-developed, strong, humorous, realistic, lifelike, convincing, unbelievable, hilarious, remarkable (= incredible), memorable, surprising, blackly funny, breathtaking, heart-warming, cliffhanger, brilliant, imaginative, stunning, fascinating, action-packed, easy-to-read, inspirational, intriguing (= very interesting), thought-provoking, witty (=smartly funny), etc.

Negative:

Confusing, tragic, shocking, poorly-written, unimaginative, boring, dull, tedious, weak, predictable, frightening, fast-paced, slow-paced, violent, unimpressive, uninspired, uninteresting, creepy, heartbreaking, redundant (= uselessly repeated), repetitive, etc.